

**In the Specification:**

After the Title, please **insert** the following priority information:

--Cross-Reference to Related Applications

This application is a division of U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 09/681,509, filed on April 18, 2001, now U.S. Patent No. 6,678,505, which issued on January 13, 2004, the entirety of which is hereby incorporated by reference.--

Also, after the Title, please **delete** the heading "Background of the Invention" and **replace with**:

--Field of the Invention--

After Paragraph No. 1, please **insert** the new heading:  
--Background of the Invention--

Please **amend** Paragraph No. 2 as follows:

-- Drivers often need to maintain contact with their passengers when the passenger leaves the vehicle. For example, when conducting errands, a passenger might enter a store only to have to come back to the car to ask an awaiting driver a question. Cellular telephones can be used to keep drivers and passengers in communication with each other, but the use of cellular telephones is attendant with difficulties. For example, there must be two cellular phones available for use, there may be no service where the car is parked, and the [[telephones']] telephones' battery might be drained. Moreover, the use of cellular phones requires dialing and often is associated with usage charges. Two-way radios also can be used to maintain communication between the driver and the passenger; however, in order for those devices to function, they must be tuned to a

common frequency, have charged batteries, and be carried by both the driver and the passenger.

Manually tuning the two-way radios to a common frequency with low noise at the present location of the vehicle creates a further impediment to their use.--

Please **delete** Paragraph No. 4, which appears on Page 1 of the specification ("The present invention relates to electronic communication systems, and, more particularly, to a system and method for providing toll-free, local communication between a person within a vehicle and a passenger who has left the vehicle.")

Please **replace** paragraph No. 10 with the following new paragraphs:

-- Fig. 1 is a stylized view of a car dashboard equipped with a communication system in accordance with the preferred embodiment of the invention;

Fig. 2 is a stylized rear view of a portable communicator constructed in accordance with the preferred embodiment; and

Fig. 3 is a flow diagram illustrating a method for achieving synchronized, low-noise communication between two communicators, one of which is permanently mounted in a car while the other is movable relative thereto. --

Please **amend** Paragraph No. 12 as follows:

--Fig. 1 illustrates a vehicle dashboard 10 that includes a matched pair of communicators 20, 30 in accordance with a preferred embodiment. In this embodiment, the first communicator 20 is fixedly coupled to the dashboard 10, and hence the vehicle, whereas the second communicator 30 can be removed from a cradle 40. Both communicators include conventional hardware and software to implement basic communication functionality. Likewise, both communicators include a microphone 22, 32 and a speaker 24, 34. Preferably, the microphone 22 of the first communicator is

configured or driven such that it has sufficient gain to pickup voices emanating anywhere within the [[car's]] car's interior, and especially from the driver in the [[driver's]] driver's seat. Preferably, the audio input circuits that include the microphones 22, 32 are connected to a band pass filter with poles positioned to filter frequencies above and below the normal range of human voices. The second communicator 30 preferably has a gain setting for its microphone 32 that is suitable for picking up voice signals proximate to the microphone but not voices remote from the microphone.--

Please **amend** Paragraph No. 16 as follows:

-- The engagement between the contacts 36 of the second communicator 30 and the contacts 46 of the cradle 40 permits the second communicator to draw upon the same electrical resources as the first communicator 20. More particularly, when seated in the cradle, a battery internal to the second communicator can receive charge from the [[car's]] car's electrical system (not shown) to ensure that it is always charged when unseated and put into service. Such circuitry is conventional. See, e.g., U.S. Patent No. 6,031,357, entitled "Battery Charge Control Circuit" and U.S. Patent No. 5,563,495, entitled "Charging Circuit With Battery Charge Monitor Circuit" for teachings relevant to the implementation of this feature.--

Please **amend** Paragraph No. 17 as follows:

--In addition, further circuitry associated with the first and second communicators 20, 30 responds to the presence or absence of the second communicator 30 in the cradle 40 so as to simplify communications between a first person within the vehicle and a passenger who wishes to converse with that first person after leaving the vehicle. Preferably, the first and second communicators 20,30 are automatically powered on while the second communicator is not seated in the cradle 40. Equivalently, power can always be on but a squelch circuit can be attenuated or a mute circuit can be

deactivated while the second communicator is not seated in the cradle to effectively permit communication between the two communicators. Alternatively or in addition, a synchronized frequency of operation can be established between the first and second communicators 20, 30 [[while]] until the second communicator 30 is [[seated in]] unseated from the cradle 40. Each of these system responses can occur in response to the removal of the second communicator 30 from the cradle 40 (that is, the disengagement of the second [[communicator's]] communicator's contacts 36 from the contacts 46 in the harness 42) or at a time thereafter, detected by the absence of the second communicator from the cradle.--

Please **amend** Paragraph No. 19 as follows:

--Circuitry for coordinating the trickle charge of the second [[communicator's]] communicator's battery, any automatic power-on, squelch attenuation, or mute deactivation circuitry, and the synchronization of the two [[communicator's]] communicator's communication channel can be done by circuitry 50 which is separate from the communicators 20,30 (as shown), or by circuitry which is internal to one or both of the two communicators. --

Please **amend** Paragraph No. 24 as follows:

--At step 330, a trickle charge is applied from the [[car's]] car's electrical system, through the contacts 46 of the cradle, over to the contacts 36 of the second communicator, to charge a battery within the second communicator. This step ensures that the second communicator is always ready for service, though its battery can be exhausted if not returned to the cradle soon enough for further charging. --